

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Fig. 6. This sheet replaces Fig. 6. In this figure, "g" has been replaced with "q", to be consistent with the description in the specification.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

REMARKS

Reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested. Moreover, the applicants have reviewed the Non-Final Office Action of August 22, 2007, and submit that this paper is responsive to all points raised therein.

I. Status of the Claims

Claims 9-22 and 33-35 are pending in the instant Patent Application.

II. Amendments to the Drawings

Fig. 6 has been amended to change "g" to "q" so that the drawings are consistent with the specification. This amendment is editorial only as it is made for purposes of consistency and clarity.

III. Rejections Under 35 USC 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 14, 15, 18, 21, 22, 33 and 35 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention.

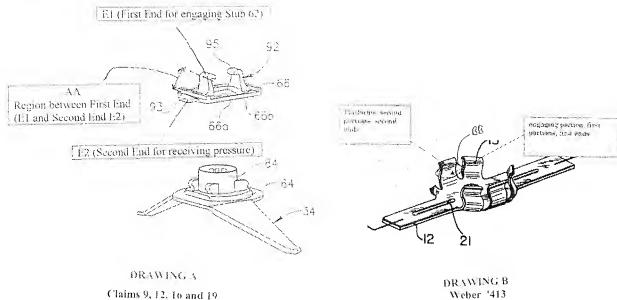
With respect to these claims, all limitations including the recited "portion" are clearly defined, based on the language surrounding the "portion" recitation and/or including the words in front of the "portion", that describe the particular structure. With respect to the "rotatable member" in these claims, the "rotatable member" is recited functionally to clearly define structure that retains or receives it. The "rotatable member" may be, for example, the stub 62 that fits into the receiving portion or structure 84 of the receiving member 64, as shown, for example, in Fig. 6.

With respect to claim 35, "retaining forces" are those forces that hold the blade onto the rotatable member (e.g., the stub 62), as exerted by the flexible members, with these forces being greater than the "rotational forces" on the blade. The rotational forces are the forces that are produced by the motor and transferred to the stub 62, to rotate the blade, in order to cut vegetation.

It is respectfully asserted that all language in claims 14, 15, 18, 21, 22, 33 and 35 is clear, whereby these claims are proper under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. Accordingly, these rejections are overcome and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

IV. Rejections Under 35 USC 102(b)

Attention is directed to Drawing A and Drawing B to accompany the discussion immediately below.



Claims 9-22 and 33-35 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Weber (U.S. Patent No. 3,670,413) (Weber '413).

1. Claims 9-22

Independent claims 9 and 16 include recitations directed to a receiver formed by structures including a receiving portion and flexible members, with the flexible members including structures at one end for engaging the rotating member, and at the other or opposite end, for receiving pressure, for moving the engaging structure out of engagement with the rotating member. For example, as shown Drawing A (taken from the exploded view of Fig. 5 of the instant patent application) there is a receiving structure 84 with flexible members 92.

Independent claims 12 and 19 are similar to claims 9 and 16, in that they recite the two portions of the flexible members, with engaging structures at one end, and pressure receiving structures, at the other, or opposite, end. In claims 9, 12, 16 and 19, the structure of the flexible

members that engages the rotating member, is different and separate from the structure that receives the pressure (for moving the rotational member engaging structure). For example, as shown in Drawing A, the flexible members 92 include structure 95 for engaging the rotating member at a first end (E1), this structure 95 at the first end (E1) being different and separate from the structure 93, the claimed "second end" (E2), for receiving pressure. The structures 93, 95 at the recited "second" (E2) and "first" (E1) ends, respectively, are separated from each other by the region AA.

For example, as a result of the structure recited in claims 9, 12, 16 and 19, the holding forces on the rotating member are greater than the rotational forces on the blade. This allows the rotating blade to remain securely engaged to the rotating member, for lawn mowing.

Weber '413 is directed to a device where a series of spring clips 13, receives and retains a hub 14. The spring clips 13 each have oppositely disposed ends, a first end (EB1) along the free side of the spring clips 13 and a second end (EB2) where each spring clip 13 joins to the central web 22. The first end EB1 and the second end EB2 are shown in Drawing B, above. These spring clips 13 engage and hold the blade 12, and serve as a point for pressure, when moving the spring clips 13 outward, to disengage the blade from the hub, at the same location, at the same end (EB1), and, are the same structure. This singular location on the spring clips 13, is indicated by the dotted line oval BB of Drawing B, above.

Moreover, the spring clips 13 forming a receiver for the hub 14, result in holding forces on the blade 12, that are much less than the rotational forces on the blade 12. This results in substantial "play" between the blade 12 and the hub 14, an arrangement not suitable for lawn mowing.

Weber '413 lacks the recited structure of claims 9, 12, 16 and 19. Rather, Weber '413 is in contrast to the recited structure of claims 9, 12, 16 and 19, where different structures at different locations, at different or opposite ends, engage the rotating member and receive pressure.

Based on the above, Weber '413 does not show the structure recited in claims 9, 12, 16, and 19. Accordingly, claims 9, 12, 16, and 19, are not anticipated by Weber '413 under 35 USC 102(b).

Since claims 9, 12, 16, and 19, are not anticipated by Weber '413 under 35 USC 102(b), claims 10 and 11, 13-15, 17, 18, and 20-22, respectively dependent thereon, are also allowable over Weber '413 for the same reasons. These claims further distinguish over Weber '413.

2. Claims 33-35

Claim 33 includes the limitations of claim 16. Claim 16 has been discussed above and the discussion of claim 16 is applicable here. Claim 33 also recites the receiving portion including an inner surface including a plurality of protrusions spaced apart to define a series of ridges and grooves for receiving at least a portion of a rotatable member having a correspondingly configured outer surface.

Weber '413 has been discussed above. That discussion is applicable here. The central web 22, cited by the Examiner includes only spring clips 13, each spring clip of a smooth inner surface. Accordingly, Weber '413 fails to show, teach or suggest any protrusions along the inner surface of the central web 22 or the spring clips 13.

Based on the above, Weber '413 lacks the structure recited in claim 33. Accordingly, claim 33 is not anticipated by Weber '413 under 35 USC 102(b).

Since claim 33 is not anticipated by Weber '413 under 35 USC 102(b), claims 34 and 35, dependent thereon, are also allowable over Weber '413 for the same reasons. These claims further distinguish over Weber '413.

V. Conclusion

The applicants also note the Examiner's citation of Jerez (U.S. Patent No. 6,247,539) and Ballas (U.S. Patent No. 4,067,108) to complete the record.

Should the Examiner have any question or comment as to the form, content or entry of this paper, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below. Similarly, if there are any further issues yet to be resolved to advance the prosecution of this application to issue, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned counsel.

Allowance of all pending claims, 9-22 and 33-35, is respectfully requested.

Applicants believe that except for a Petition for a Two Month Extension of Time, no other fees are currently due, however, if any fee is deemed necessary in connection with this Amendment and Response, please charge Deposit Account No. 12-0600.

Respectfully submitted,

LATHROP & GAGE, LC

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